

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-05
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USLO PEKING
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONLULULU HAWAII 0673
DOD/ISA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 164738

CINCPAC FOR POLAD, PARIS FOR MARESCA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: US, VM, MLI, CB

SUBJECT: VOA REPORT ON VIETNAM/CAMBODIA FIGHTING

REF: BANGKOK 18387

1. WIRE SERVICE REPORTS JUNE 28 HAVE REFERRED TO A VOA
REPORT (ALSO JUNE 28) IN WHICH COMMENTS ON THE CAMBODIA-
VIETNAM FIGHTING BY "US OFFICIALS" ARE QUOTED. AT THE NEXT
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MEETING WITH SRV LIAISON OFFICER, MARESCA SHOULD CONVEY THE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- WE ARE AWARE OF WIRE SERVICE REPORTS CITING A VOICE OF
AMERICA REPORT IN WHICH "U.S. OFFICIALS" ARE QUOTED COMMENT-
ING ON RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA. WE WISH
THE SRV TO KNOW THE OFFICIAL USG REACTION TO THESE WIRE

SERVICE REPORTS. AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 28, THE SUBJECT AROSE AND THE SPOKESMAN (HODDING CARTER III) MADE THE FOLLOWING REMARKS.

-- "WE HAVE REPEATEDLY SAID THAT OUR REPORTS FROM THE AREA (VIETNAM-CAMBODIA BORDER) ARE SKETCHY AND LIMITED. THE USG IS NOT IN A POSITION, NOR DOES THE USG BELIEVE IT APPROPRIATE, TO ATTEMPT TO CHARACTERIZE THE INTENT OR THE SCALE OF FIGHTING BETWEEN VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA. IT APPEARS THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT UPSURGE IN FIGHTING DURING RECENT WEEKS AT VARIOUS POINTS ALONG THE BORDER. HOWEVER THIS FIGHTING HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR MONTHS, WITH UPS AND DOWNS IN INTENSITY. THE USG IS NOT ABLE TO CONFIRM THE NUMBER OF TROOPS CLAIMED BY THE VOA AND OTHER REPORTS AS INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING. FOR THIS REASON, THE VOA REPORT IS INACCURATE AND MISLEADING."

-- SPOKESMAN REPEATED THAT IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE USG TO SPECULATE ON EITHER VIETNAMESE OR CAMBODIAN OBJECTIVES IN THIS CONFLICT, AND IT DOES NOT INTEND TO DO SO.

-- IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM JOURNALISTS, SPOKESMAN REITERATED THAT THE OFFICIAL VIEWS OF THE USG ARE NOT REPRESENTED BY THE VOA REPORT.

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2. IT MAY BE NECESSARY FOR MARESCA TO POINT OUT THAT WHILE VOA ACCEPTS POLICY GUIDANCE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT, IN ACTUAL COVERAGE OF FAST BREAKING NEWS STORIES THE VOA ENJOYS WIDE LATITUDE IN SUBJECT, STYLE, AND CONTENT.
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